

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Previously Presented) An advertisement opportunity trading system that enables communication between a terminal of a sponsor of an advertisement and a terminal of media which distributes an advertisement via a communication network, in order to intermediate between the sponsor and the media for facilitating a trade for an advertisement opportunity offered by the media, said system comprising:

an advertisement data reception unit which receives advertisement data from a sponsor who wants the advertisement data to be distributed on an advertisement opportunity, the advertisement data including genre data describing a genre of the advertisement;

an advertisement opportunity reception unit which receives an advertisement opportunity offered by media that includes prohibited genre data designating a genre of advertisement that will not be permitted for the advertisement opportunity;

an advertisement data check unit that checks whether the genre data of the advertisement data corresponds to the prohibited genre data of the advertisement opportunity and notifies a result of said checking to the media;

a distribution accepting unit which accepts an application for distribution of the advertisement data from the sponsor only after receiving information from the media representing that distribution of the advertisement data is appropriate for the advertisement opportunity;

a trade process unit which performs a process for trading the advertisement opportunity based on the application accepted by said distribution accepting unit;

an advertisement data registration unit which registers the advertisement data received by said advertisement data reception unit;

an advertisement opportunity registration unit which registers the advertisement opportunity received by said advertisement opportunity reception unit; and

an advertisement opportunity publicizing unit which publicizes information on the advertisement opportunity registered in said advertisement opportunity registration unit via said communication network,

wherein said distribution accepting unit accepts an application for distribution of the advertisement data registered in said advertisement data registration unit from the sponsor,

wherein in a case where said distribution accepting unit accepts applications for distribution of advertisement data from a plurality of sponsors for a same advertisement opportunity, said trade process unit puts up the advertisement opportunity for auction,

wherein:

a plurality of advertisement data can be registered by a sponsor in said advertisement data registration unit for one advertisement opportunity; and

in a case where the media determines that the plurality of advertisement data of the sponsor are appropriate for distribution on the one advertisement opportunity, said distribution accepting unit accepts an application for distribution of one advertisement data designated by the sponsor from the plurality of advertisement data, as one to be actually distributed, and

wherein said advertisement data reception unit changes the advertisement data designated by the sponsor as one to be actually distributed with another advertisement data among the plurality of advertisement data in accordance with an instruction from the sponsor.

2 - 7. (Cancelled)

8. (Original) The advertisement opportunity trading system according to claim 1, further comprising a competition check unit which checks whether a plurality of sponsors compete in a same business category or not in a case where said distribution accepting unit accepts applications for distribution of advertisement data from the plurality of sponsors for one advertisement opportunity, wherein:

said competition check unit checks whether or not competition exists among the plurality of sponsors by a business category of the sponsor; and

said trade process unit permits an application for distribution of advertisement data on the advertisement opportunity from only one sponsor for each business category among the plurality of sponsors, in a case where competition among the plurality of sponsors is detected by checking of said competition check unit.

9. (Previously Presented) The advertisement opportunity trading system according to claim 1 further comprising a competition check unit which checks whether a plurality of sponsors compete in a same business category or not in a case where said distribution accepting unit accepts applications for distribution of advertisement data from the plurality of sponsors for one advertisement opportunity, wherein:

said competition check unit checks whether or not competition exists among the plurality of sponsors by a business category of the sponsor; and

said trade process unit permits an application for distribution of advertisement data on the advertisement opportunity from only one sponsor for each business category among the plurality of sponsors, in a case where competition among the plurality of sponsors is detected by checking of said competition check unit.

10. (Original) The advertisement opportunity trading system according to claim 1, further comprising an advertisement data mirroring unit which transmits advertisement data which is determined as appropriate for distribution by the media to an advertisement distribution controller which performs distribution of advertisement data, wherein:

said advertisement data mirroring unit transmits the advertisement data to said advertisement distribution controller before a trade for an advertisement opportunity is started by said trade process unit; and

said advertisement distribution controller stores the transmitted advertisement data, and performs distribution of the stored advertisement data which is to be distributed on

an advertisement opportunity, in a case where a contract for the advertisement opportunity is settled.

11. (Previously Presented) The advertisement opportunity trading system according to claim 1 further comprising an advertisement data mirroring unit which transmits advertisement data which is determined as appropriate for distribution by the media to an advertisement distribution controller which performs distribution of advertisement data, wherein:

said advertisement data mirroring unit transmits the advertisement data to said advertisement distribution controller before a trade for an advertisement opportunity is started by said trade process unit; and

said advertisement distribution controller stores the transmitted advertisement data, and performs distribution of the stored advertisement data which is to be distributed on an advertisement opportunity, in a case where a contract for the advertisement opportunity is settled.

12. (Currently Amended) A market control server which is a server apparatus which enables communication between a terminal of a sponsor of an advertisement and a terminal of media which distributes an advertisement via a communication network, in order to intermediate between the sponsor and the media for facilitating a trade for an advertisement opportunity offered by the media, said server comprising:

an advertisement data reception unit which receives advertisement data from a sponsor who wants the advertisement data to be distributed on an advertisement opportunity, the advertisement data including genre data describing a genre of the advertisement;

an advertisement opportunity reception unit which receives an advertisement opportunity offered by media that include prohibited genre data designating a genre of advertisement that is permitted for the advertisement opportunity;

an advertisement data check unit which checks whether the genre data ~~the advertisement data~~ corresponds to the prohibited genre data of the advertisement opportunity and notifies a result of said checking to the media;

a distribution accepting unit which accepts an application for distribution of the advertisement data from the sponsor only after receiving information from the media representing that distribution of the advertisement data is appropriate for the advertisement opportunity;

a trade process unit which performs a process for trading the advertisement opportunity based on the application accepted by said distribution accepting unit;

an advertisement data registration unit which registers the advertisement data received by said advertisement data reception unit;

an advertisement opportunity registration unit which registers the advertisement opportunity received by said advertisement opportunity reception unit; and

an advertisement opportunity publicizing unit which publicizes information on the advertisement opportunity registered in said advertisement opportunity registration unit via said communication network,

wherein said distribution accepting unit accepts an application for distribution of the advertisement data registered in said advertisement data registration unit from the sponsor,

wherein in a case where said distribution accepting unit accepts applications for distribution of advertisement data from a plurality of sponsors for a same advertisement opportunity, said trade process unit puts up the advertisement opportunity for auction,

wherein:

a plurality of advertisement data can be registered by a sponsor in said advertisement data registration unit for one advertisement opportunity; and

in a case where the media determines that the plurality of advertisement data of the sponsor are appropriate for distribution on the one advertisement opportunity, said distribution accepting unit accepts an application for distribution of one

advertisement data designated by the sponsor from the plurality of advertisement data, as one to be actually distributed, and

wherein said advertisement data reception unit changes the advertisement data designated by the sponsor as one to be actually distributed with another advertisement data among the plurality of advertisement data in accordance with an instruction from the sponsor.

13 - 18. (Cancelled)

19. (Original) The market control server according to claim 12, further comprising a competition check unit which checks whether a plurality of sponsors compete in a same business category or not in a case where said distribution accepting unit accepts applications for distribution of advertisement data from the plurality of sponsors for one advertisement opportunity, wherein:

said competition check unit checks whether or not competition exists among the plurality of sponsors by a business category of the sponsor; and

said trade process unit permits an application for distribution of advertisement data on the advertisement opportunity from only one sponsor for each business category among the plurality of sponsors, in a case where competition among the plurality of sponsors is detected by checking of said competition check unit.

20. (Previously Presented) The market control server according to claim 12, further comprising a competition check unit which checks whether a plurality of sponsors compete in a same business category or not in a case where said distribution accepting unit accepts applications for distribution of advertisement data from the plurality of sponsors for one advertisement opportunity, wherein:

said competition check unit checks whether or not competition exists among the plurality of sponsors by a business category of the sponsor; and

said trade process unit permits an application for distribution of advertisement data on the advertisement opportunity from only one sponsor for each business category among the plurality of sponsors, in a case where competition among the plurality of sponsors is detected by checking of said competition check unit.

21. (Original) The market control server according to claim 12, further comprising an advertisement data mirroring unit which transmits advertisement data which is determined as appropriate for distribution by the media to an advertisement distribution controller which performs distribution of advertisement data, wherein:

said advertisement data mirroring unit transmits the advertisement data to said advertisement distribution controller before a trade for an advertisement opportunity is started by said trade process unit; and

said advertisement distribution controller stores the transmitted advertisement data, and performs distribution of the stored advertisement data which is to be distributed on an advertisement opportunity, in a case where a contract for the advertisement opportunity is settled.

22. (Previously Presented) The market control server according to claim 12, further comprising an advertisement data mirroring unit which transmits advertisement data which is determined as appropriate for distribution by the media to an advertisement distribution controller which performs distribution of advertisement data, wherein:

said advertisement data mirroring unit transmits the advertisement data to said advertisement distribution controller before a trade for an advertisement opportunity is started by said trade process unit; and

said advertisement distribution controller stores the transmitted advertisement data, and performs distribution of the store advertisement data which is to be distributed on an advertisement opportunity, in a case where a contract for the advertisement opportunity is settled.

23. (Previously Presented) An advertisement opportunity trading method which enables communication between a terminal of a sponsor of an advertisement and a terminal of media which distributes an advertisement via a communication network, in order to intermediate between the sponsor and the media for facilitating a trade for an advertisement opportunity offered by the media, said method comprising:

receiving advertisement data from a sponsor who wants the advertisement data to be distributed on an advertisement opportunity, the advertisement data including genre data describing a genre of the advertisement;

receiving an advertisement opportunity offered by media, the advertising opportunity including a prohibited genre data designating a genre of advertisement that will not be permitted for the advertisement opportunity;

checking whether the genre data of the advertisement data corresponds to the prohibited genre data of the advertisement opportunity and notifying a result of said checking to the media;

accepting an application for distribution of the advertisement data from the sponsor only after receiving information from the media representing that distribution of the advertisement data is appropriate for the advertisement opportunity;

performing a trading process for trading the advertisement opportunity based on the application accepted in said receiving information and accepting an application;

registering the advertisement data received in said receiving advertisement data;

registering the advertisement opportunity received in said receiving an advertisement opportunity; and

publicizing information on the advertisement opportunity registered in said registering the advertisement opportunity via said communication network,

wherein an application for distribution of the advertisement data registered in said registering the advertisement data is accepted from the sponsor in said receiving information and accepting an application,

wherein in a case where applications for distribution of advertisement data from a plurality of sponsors are accepted in said receiving information and accepting an application for a same advertisement opportunity, the advertisement opportunity is put up for auction in said performing a trading process,

wherein:

a plurality of advertisement data can be registered by a sponsor in said registering the advertisement data for one advertisement opportunity; and

in a case where the media determines that the plurality of advertisement data of the sponsor are appropriate for distribution on the one advertisement opportunity, an application for distribution of one advertisement data designated by the sponsor from the plurality of advertisement data is accepted as one to be actually distributed in said receiving information and accepting an application, and

wherein the advertisement data designated by the sponsor as one to be actually distributed is changed with another advertisement data among the plurality of advertisement data in accordance with an instruction from the sponsor in said receiving advertisement data.

24 - 29. (Cancelled)

30. (Original) The advertisement opportunity trading method according to claim 23, further comprising checking whether a plurality of sponsors compete in a same business category or not in a case where applications for distribution of advertisement data from the plurality of sponsors are accepted in said receiving information and accepting an application for one advertisement opportunity, wherein:

whether or not competition exists among the plurality of sponsors is checked by a business category of the sponsor in said checking; and

an application for distribution of advertisement data on the advertisement opportunity from only one sponsor for each business category among the plurality of sponsors is permitted in said performing a trading process, in a case where competition among the plurality of sponsors is detected in said checking.

31. (Previously Presented) The advertisement opportunity trading method according to claim 23, further comprising checking whether a plurality of sponsors compete in a same business category or not in a case where applications for distribution of advertisement data from the plurality of sponsors are accepted in said receiving information and accepting an application for one advertisement opportunity, wherein:

whether or not competition exists among the plurality of sponsors is checked by a business category of the sponsor in said checking; and

an application for distribution of advertisement data on the advertisement opportunity from only one sponsor for each business category among the plurality of sponsors is permitted in said performing a trading process, in a case where competition among the plurality of sponsors is detected in said checking.

32. (Original) The advertising opportunity trading method according to claim 23, further comprising transmitting advertisement data which is determined as appropriate for distribution by the media to an advertisement distribution controller which performs distribution of advertisement data for mirroring purpose, wherein:

the advertisement data is transmitted to said advertisement distribution controller in said transmitting advertisement data before a trade for an advertisement opportunity is started in said performing a trading process; and

the advertisement data is stored in said advertisement distribution controller and is to be distributed on an advertisement opportunity by said advertisement distribution controller, in a case where a contract for the advertisement opportunity is settled.

33. (Previously Presented) The advertisement opportunity trading method according to claim 23, further comprising transmitting advertisement data which is determined as appropriate for distribution by the media to an advertisement distribution controller for performing distribution of advertisement data for mirroring purpose, wherein:

the advertisement data is transmitted to said advertisement distribution controller in said transmitting advertisement data before a trade for an advertisement opportunity is started in said performing a trading process; and

the advertisement data is stored in said advertisement distribution controller and is to be distributed on an advertisement opportunity by said advertisement distribution controller, in a case where a contract for the advertisement opportunity is settled.

34. (Previously Presented) A computer-readable recording medium which stores a program for controlling a computer to function as:

advertisement data receiving means for receiving advertisement data from a sponsor who wants the advertisement data to be distributed on an advertisement opportunity, the advertisement data including genre data describing a genre of the advertisement;

advertisement data registering means for registering the advertisement data received by said advertisement data receiving means;

advertisement opportunity receiving means for receiving an advertisement opportunity offered by media, the advertisement opportunity including prohibited genre data designating a genre of advertisement that will not be permitted for the advertisement opportunity;

advertisement opportunity registering means for registering the advertisement opportunity received by said advertisement opportunity receiving means;

advertisement opportunity publicizing means for publicizing information on the advertisement opportunity registered by said advertisement opportunity registering means via said communication network;

advertisement data check means that checks whether the genre data of the advertisement data corresponds to the prohibited genre data of the advertisement opportunity and notifies a result of said checking to the media;

distribution accepting means for accepting an application for distribution of the advertisement data from the sponsor only after receiving information from the media representing that distribution of the advertisement data is appropriate for the advertisement opportunity; and

a trade processing means for performing a process for trading the advertisement opportunity based on the application accepted by said distribution accepting means,

wherein determining that the advertisement is appropriate for the advertisement opportunity comprises:

designating means for designating one advertisement data out of a plurality of advertisement data registered by a sponsor for one advertisement opportunity as one to be actually distributed;

wherein the advertisement data designated by the sponsor as one to be actually distributed is changed with another advertisement data among the plurality of advertisement data in accordance with an instruction from the sponsor.

35. (Canceled).

36. (Original) The computer-readable recording medium according to claim 34, storing a program for controlling a computer to further function as competition checking means for checking whether a plurality of sponsors compete in a same business category or not in a case where applications for distribution of advertisement data from the plurality of sponsors are accepted by said distribution accepting means for one advertisement opportunity, and permitting an application for distribution of advertisement data on the advertisement

opportunity from only one sponsor for each business category among the plurality of sponsors in a case where competition exists among the plurality of sponsors.

37. (Original) The computer-readable recording medium according to claim 34, storing a program for controlling a computer to further function as:

advertisement data mirroring means for transmitting advertisement data which is determined as appropriate for distribution by the media to advertisement distribution controlling means for performing distribution of advertisement data before a trade for an advertisement opportunity is started by said trade processing means; and

advertisement distribution controlling means for storing the transmitted advertisement data and performing distribution of the stored advertisement data which is to be distributed on an advertisement opportunity, in a case where a contract for the advertisement opportunity is settled.

38. (Previously Presented) An advertisement trading and distribution control apparatus which provides information and an advertisement data to a terminal of an audience, said apparatus comprising:

a trade process unit for performing a trading of an advertisement opportunity offered by a media in connection with advertisement data from a sponsor, said advertisement data to be distributed on the advertisement opportunity to the terminal of the audience, the advertisement data including genre data describing a genre of the advertisement;

advertisement data check means that checks whether the genre data of the advertisement data corresponds to prohibited genre data of an advertisement opportunity and notifying to a media that offers the advertisement opportunity said result of checking;

distributing means for distributing the advertisement data to said terminal of an audience from a market control server which intermediates between the sponsor of the advertisement data and the media only after receiving information from the media

representing that distribution of the advertisement is appropriate for the advertisement opportunity; and

storing means for receiving advertisement data to be provided to the terminal of the audience from said market control server, and storing the received advertisement data,

wherein said distributing means starts distributing the advertisement data stored in said storing means to said terminal of an audience from a time set for the advertisement opportunity,

wherein determining that the advertisement is appropriate for the advertisement opportunity comprises:

designating means for designating one advertisement data out of a plurality of advertisement data registered by a sponsor for one advertisement opportunity as one to be actually distributed;

wherein the advertisement data designated by the sponsor as one to be actually distributed is changed with another advertisement data among the plurality of advertisement data in accordance with an instruction from the sponsor.

39. (Previously Presented) An advertisement trading and distribution control method for providing information and an advertisement data to a terminal of an audience, said method comprising:

performing trading on a trade process unit for performing a trading of an advertisement opportunity offered by a media in connection with advertisement data from a sponsor, said advertisement data to be distributed on the advertisement opportunity to the terminal of the audience, the advertisement data including genre data describing a genre of the advertisement;

checking whether the genre data of the advertisement data corresponds to prohibited genre data of an advertisement opportunity and notifying to a media that offers the advertisement opportunity said result of checking;

distributing the advertisement data to said terminal of an audience from a market control server which intermediates between the sponsor of the advertisement data and the media only after receiving information from the media representing that distribution of the advertisement is appropriate for the advertisement opportunity; and

receiving advertisement data to be provided to an audience from said market control server, and storing the received advertisement data,

wherein distribution of the advertisement data is started from a time set for the advertisement opportunity, and

wherein determining that the advertisement is appropriate for the advertisement opportunity comprises:

designating one advertisement data out of a plurality of advertisement data registered by a sponsor for one advertisement opportunity as one to be actually distributed;

wherein the advertisement data designated by the sponsor as one to be actually distributed is changed with another advertisement data among the plurality of advertisement data in accordance with an instruction from the sponsor.

40. (Previously Presented) A computer-readable recording medium which stores a program for controlling a computer to function as:

a trade process unit for performing a trading of an advertisement opportunity offered by a media in connection with advertisement data from a sponsor, said advertisement data to be distributed on the advertisement opportunity to a terminal of an audience, the advertisement data including genre data describing a genre of the advertisement;

advertisement data check means for checking whether the genre data of the advertisement data corresponds to prohibited genre data of an advertisement opportunity and notifying to a media that offers the advertisement opportunity said result of checking;

distributing means for distributing the advertisement data to the terminal of the audience from a market control server which intermediates between the sponsor of the

advertisement data and the media only after receiving information from the media representing that distribution of the advertisement is appropriate for the advertisement;

storing means for storing the advertisement data; and

distribution starting means for starting distribution of the advertisement data stored in said storing means to said terminal of the audience from a time set for the advertisement opportunity,

wherein determining that the advertisement is appropriate for the advertisement opportunity comprises:

designating means for designating one advertisement data out of a plurality of advertisement data registered by a sponsor for one advertisement opportunity as one to be actually distributed;

wherein the advertisement data designated by the sponsor as one to be actually distributed is changed with another advertisement data among the plurality of advertisement data in accordance with an instruction from the sponsor.